

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CIAE-00

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 6115

USIA FOR IEU/MCLAUGHLIN

E.O. 11652: GDS

OYTAGS: PINT, PO, MILL, PINS

SUBJECT: POLITICAL-MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

REF: LISBON 6092 DTG 151452Z OCT 75

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SUMMARY: PCP-FAR LEFT ALLIANCE CONTINUED ITS ATTEMPT TO TOPPLE

THE AZEVEDO GOVERNMENT WITH A RADICAL SOLDIERS DEMONSTRATION IN EVORA AND THREE MEETINGS NEAR LISBON DESIGNED TO ORGANIZE "POPULAR POWER". HOWEVER, PCP AND FAR LEFT IS NOT HAVING EVERYTHING ITS OWN WAY. THE PRESIDENT CAME OUT AGAINST DEMONSTRATIONS IN FAVOR OF MILITARY UNITS, GOP MADE SOME SMALL GOP GAINS IN RADIO, AND POSSIBILITY EXISTS THAT ATTACKS ON COMMUNISTS' HOMES AND OFFICES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE MAY BE RESUMED AGAIN.

1. SUV DEMONSTRATION IN EVORA: RADICAL SOLDIERS' ORGANIZATION, SOLDIERS UNITED WILL WIN (SUV) HELD DEMONSTRATION OCT 15 IN EVORA, HEADQUARTERS OF SOUTHERN REGIONAL MILITARY COMMAND. EMBASSY OFFICER ON SCENE ESTIMATED 3,000 PARTICIPANTS OF WHOM 200-300 WORE UNIFORMS NONE WORE MASKS. SAILORS AND MILITARY POLICE BUT NO OFFICERS WERE OBSERVED AMONG DEMONSTRATORS. CITY OF EVORA HAD HOLIDAY ATMOSPHERE, BUT OTHERWISE FUNCTIONED NORMALLY. EMBASSY OBSERVER AND LOCAL PRESS NOTED THAT MANY DEMONSTRATORS, INCLUDING SOME MILITARY PARTICIPANTS WERE BUSED IN FROM LISBON. SUV CLAIMED TO HAVE SUPPORT OF OFFICERS AND SERGEANTS; ATTACKED EFFORTS OF AZEVEDO GOVERNMENT TO TURN PORTUGAL OVER TO IMPERIALIST GRASP; EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS TO FIGHT AGAINST REACTION; AND CALLED FOR LEGALIZATION OF SUV. COMMUNIST-LINING PRESS CLAIMED THAT TENS OF THOUSANDS HAD PARTICIPATED IN "SUCCESSFUL" DEMONSTRATION.

2. PRESIDENT ASKS END TO DIVISIVE DEMONSTRATIONS: PRESIDENT IN ROLE AS ARMED FORCES CHIEF OF STAFF ISSUED STATEMENT OCT 15 APPEALING TO POLITICAL FORCES TRULY INTERESTED IN BRINGING SOCIALISM TO PORTUGAL TO SHUN DEMONSTRATIONS OF SUPPORT FOR MILITARY UNITS. HE SAID DEMONSTRATIONS ERODE DISCIPLINE, CREATE DIVISIONS, AND OPEN PATH FOR RETURN TO FASCISM. COSTA GOMES NOTED THAT DEMONSTRATIONS ARE OFTEN EXAGGERATED BY THE MEDIA, AND THAT ARMED FORCES REQUIRE DISCIPLINE TO FULFILL ASSIGNED MISSION.

3. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS: A NUMBER OF MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS BEARING ON THE QUESTION OF ARMED FORCES DISCIPLINE OCCURRED OCTOBER 15:

-- RASP: RADICAL SOLDIERS OCCUPYING SERRA DE PILAR ARTILLERY REGIMENT (RASP) RETURNED TO THEIR UNITS OCTOBER-15. ACCORDING CONFIDENTIAL

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TO OCCUPANTS' SPOKESMAN, THEY WILL BRIEF OWN UNITS ON RASP INCIDENT AND WILL "GO TO STREETS" SHOULD INQUIRY INTO INCIDENT, BEING CONDUCTED BY HOSTILE NORTHERN MILITARY REGION COMMAND, ARRIVE AT UNACCEPTABLE CONCLUSIONS.

-- MILITARY POLICE SERGEANTS: 75 SERGEANTS OF RADICAL LISBON MILITARY POLICE REGIMENT (RPM) REQUESTED TRANSFERS FROM THAT UNIT. REQUEST FOLLOWS THEIR RELEASE, OCTOBER 13, OF STATEMENT DISASSOCIATING THEMSELVES FROM RAMPANT INDISCIPLINE AND

"OPPORTUNISM" OF RPM.

-- AIR FORCE SERGEANTS ASSEMBLY: AIR FORCE SERGEANTS' ASSEMBLY MET OCTOBER 15 TO DISCUSS RESTRUCTURING OF THAT BODY. RESULTS OF MEETING, WHICH WILL RECONVENE OCTOBER 16, WERE NOT ANNOUNCED.
-- UNIT ASSEMBLY PLENUM: PLENARY ASSEMBLY OF ENLISTED UNIT ASSEMBLY DELEGATES (ADU) REPRESENTING 37 UNITS OF THE LISBON MILITARY REGION (RML) MET OCTOBER 15 AND APPROVED A MOTION OF SUPPORT FOR PORTUGUESE DISABLED VETERANS.

4. "POPULAR POWER" DEMONSTRATIONS: A FEW THOUSAND PEOPLE PARTICIPATED IN THREE OCT 15 DEMONSTRATIONS NEAR LISBON -- AT VILA FRANCA DE XIRA, ALVERCA, AND ALHANDRA -- IN SUPPORT OF "POPULAR POWER." THE DEMONSTRATORS, REVEALING CLOSE COORDINATION AND POSSIBLY CENTRAL GUIDANCE, ALSO ADVOCATED DEMANDS CLOSELY LINKED TO SUV AND OTHER LEFTIST ORGANIZATIONS: AN END TO PURGES OF LEFTISTS, EXPULSION OF PPD FROM GOVERNMENT, AND THE RETURN OF VASCO GONCALVES. SUV MEMBERS WERE PRESENT AT THE VILA FRANCA DE XIRA MARCH.

5. BOMBINGS RESUME: ATTACKS ON LEFTIST TARGETS HAVE RESUMED WITH FIVE OCT 14 BOMBINGS. IN FAFE, NORTH OF OPORTO, THREE BOMBS WERE SET OFF NEAR HOMES OF TWO COMMUNIST PARTY MEMBERS AND FELLOW-TRAVELLING PORTUGUESE DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT (MDP) MEMBER. IN OPORTO, A BOMB WAS THROWN OUTSIDE OFFICES OF COMMUNIST INTERNATIONALIST LEAGUE (LCI). IN ELVAS, DUE EAST OF LISBON NEAR SPANISH BORDER, SMALL BOMB WAS PLACED AT OFFICES OF REGIONAL AGRARIAN REFORM CENTER. NO INJURIES INCURRED IN ANY OF EXPLOSIONS.

6. SCHOOLS DELAY OPENING: THE OPENING OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS, NORMALLY SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 1, HAS BEEN DELAYED UNTIL OCTOBER 20 -- OR LATER. THE POSTPONEMENT IS DUE TO A SERIES OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS, COMPLICATED BY STRIKES, IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND BY DEMANDS BY TEACHERS THAT ALL FACULTY EMPLOYED

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DURING LAST YEAR BE REHIRED, REGARDLESS OF QUALIFICATIONS. WHILE THE MINISTRY HAS HAD SIMILAR ADMINISTRATIVE DIFFICULTIES IN PRIOR YEARS, THE SITUATION IS CURRENTLY COMPOUNDED BY THE RECENT MINISTERIAL CHANGES, THE INFLUX OF ANGOLAN REFUGEES, A FIRE WHICH DESTROYED IMPORTANT MINISTERIAL RECORDS, THE TEACHERS' TENURE DEMANDS, AND A STRIKE OF THE SECTION RESPONSIBLE FOR TEACHER PLACEMENT.

7. EMISSORA NACIONAL: WORKERS OF THE NATIONAL RADIO STATION, EMISSORA NACIONAL, ELECTED A NON-COMMUNIST WORKERS COMMISSION IN SECRET BALLOT ELECTIONS BY A VOTE OF 432 TO 215 (SEPTTEL). THE VOTE WAS A SIGNIFICANT DEFEAT FOR THE COMMUNIST PARTY WHICH HAS LONG EXERCISED PREDOMINANT INFLUENCE IN THE NEWS AND PROGRAMMING SECTIONS OF THE STATION. THE VOTE MAY REINFORCE THE RECENT TREND TOWARD MORE OBJECTIVE REPORTING BY THE STATION.

8. RADIO RENASCENCA: COMMANDOS, WHO HAVE BEEN GUARDING RADIO RENASCENCA TRANSMITTERS AND PREVENTING BROADCASTS, MOVED OUT THE STATION PERSONNEL AND SEALED THE PREMISES ON OCT 16. ALTHOUGH THE TRANSMITTERS ARE NOW GUARDED ONLY BY TWO ORDINARY POLICEMEN, NO EFFORT HAS BEEN MADE BY LEFT TO RETAKE THE TRANSMITTERS.

9. GERMAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AID FOR PS: OCT 16 COMMUNIST-LINING LISBON PRESS SEIZED ON WILLY BRANDT'S OCT 15 STATEMENTS ON PORTUGAL TO CHARGE THAT THE SPD HAD PROVIDED "INDIRECT," OR ACCORDING TO ONE NEWSPAPER, "DIRECT" AID TO PORTUGUESE SOCIALIST PARTY (PS). SKEPTICAL TREATMENT WAS GIVEN TO HIS DENIALS THAT SPD HAD SERVED AS CONDUIT FOR CIA FUNDS FOR PS.

10. COMMENT: SUV EFFORT IN EVORA, EXAGGERATED COVERAGE OF SUV BY COMMUNIST-LINING PRESS, AND INCREASING PACE OF PCP-BACKED ATTEMPTS TO ORGANIZE "POPULAR POWER" AS A WAY TO GET AROUND COMMUNIST'S LACK OF ELECTORAL STRENGTH ARE ALL PART OF PCP-FAR LEFT EFFORT TO DESTABLIZE THE POLITICAL SITUATION AND BRING DOWN AZEVEDO'S GOVERNMENT. PCP AND FAR LEFT'S OPPORTUNISTIC ALLIANCE IS NOT HAVING EVERYTHING ITS OWN WAY, AS PRESIDENT'S COMMUNIQUE, MP SEARGENTS STATEMENT, AND GOVERNMENT'S GAINS IN DEALING WITH THE RADIO PROBLEM INDICATE. IT IS TOO EARLY TO TELL IF RECENT BOMBINGS IN NORTH MARK THE RETURN TO THE VIRTUALLY DAILY ATTACKS ON THE PCP AND ITS SYMPATHIZERS THAT OCCURRED DURING THE SUMMER EFFORT TO GET RID OF THE GONCALVES GOVERNMENT.
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